

Four Quarters



NO. 1
VOL. XXV

AUTUMN 1975
SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS





Four Quarters

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE FACULTY OF LA SALLE COLLEGE
PHILA., PA. 19141

VOL. XXV, NO. 1

AUTUMN, 1975

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Published quarterly in Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer by the faculty of La Salle College, 20th & Olney Aves., Phila., Pa. 19141. Subscriptions: \$3.00 annually, \$5.00 for two years. © 1975 by La Salle College. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by stamped self-addressed envelope. Available in Microform from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Mich., 48106. Indexed in American Humanities Index. Second class postage paid at Philadelphia, Pa.

Marginalia . . .

CAST CHANGES

For the most part, editors are invisible people. To the reader or to the hopeful writer, they are a name on the masthead or a necessary part of the address on a manuscript envelope. When they disappear from that masthead, the loss creates no more effect than that of a stone sinking below the surface of still waters. The waters, in E. A. Robinson's words, "Though ruffled once, would soon appear/The same as ever to the sight."

If an editor were just a name, all of this would be true, but behind the name on the masthead is a person, and in the case of Richard Lautz, that has made all the difference. Richard has been Poetry Editor of this magazine for the past four years. He is stepping down from the job this year, conscientious in his resignation as in his work. He feels that he may be growing stale, that it is time for a fresh eye and a new ear. This seems a good time, therefore, to share with you a few impressions of Richard so that you will understand why I will miss him.

To a questioner who asked whether he was a publishing poet himself, Richard once said, with a smile not at all regretful, "No, I'm just a groupie." It was a typically direct answer for him, but I think it suggests some insight into why he was a good poetry editor. He enjoyed the role of reader. He never read submissions of poems with his own ego involved. Contributors were never competitors. More than anything, Richard played the indispensable role of audience—a discerning, sympathetic, sensitive reader. What more could any poet ask?

Richard is also an indefatigable reader, a valuable asset in an editor. When he gives up reading those piles of manuscripts on his desk, they will be replaced by piles of poetry books, and Richard will have a bit more time to catch up on the volumes of the newer poets. But he will still be a poet's dream reader: open, attentive, knowledgeable, patient, and, most characteristic of him, enthusiastic.

His enthusiasm for teaching poetry helped win him a Lindback Award for distinguished teaching last year. That same enthusiasm takes him to poetry conferences, readings, workshops—anywhere he can be involved with poets and poetry. I shall miss the quick smile and deep delight in the voice when he reads an appealing manuscript and says, "This is wonderful!" As a matter of fact, I may slip him a manuscript or two now and then just in the hope of hearing it again.

(Continued on Page 47)

Silent Acres

ANN JONES

THE TIDE ROSE to record heights, washing around the barnacle encrusted pilings supporting the building, filling the high-ceilinged room with the creaks and groans of a ship at sea. Reflected light, filtering through large, many-paned windows, splashed against the walls and ceiling with a rhythmic persistence that had an hypnotic effect upon Daniel who found himself putting down his drink and walking over to the wood burning stove that was the main source of heat for the gallery. As he shoved in another piece of the scrub oak indigenous to this area, he had the sensation of the floor lifting ever so slightly, and sliding across the water instead of the water sliding beneath it. Laughing at himself, he nevertheless walked cautiously to the window and peered out into the twilight as though expecting to see familiar landmarks such as the fish and bait store, the clam factory, the local courthouse up on the hill, receding into the distance. But they were each in their accustomed place, as was he.

It began to rain. Down at the marina, gusting wind whipped the two red warning flags straight out, and whined through the forest of boat rigging. From where he stood, Daniel could not hear its moan, and yet he heard it more clearly than the beating of his own heart, and found himself tensing as it approached the open stretch of riffled water. Hurrying, almost running, he managed to be on the far side of the large room when it finally struck the windows, rattling the panes, causing a ceramic owl on the window ledge to tremble. Immediately, the lights dimmed, flickered twice, and went out.

"Damn!" Laurel said angrily, her voice drifting down from the loft where she was placing the final strokes on the painting she had been working on for months. Not that any of her paintings were ever what she considered "finished." If it wasn't for Daniel physically removing them from her studio, she would still be working on the first one she had made: a little change here, a

little change there, a further bending of limits, a distorting extension, an opening, and the opaque density of the personality she was portraying would either be revealed in all its complexity, or dissolved in a final muddy cloud. In which case it would simply be painted out, and begun again. If he hadn't stopped her in time. If she had refused to accept his judgment. Not that it would matter to her either way. She would be content to work on one canvas for the rest of her life and, for her, this would not be selfishness, for she was incapable of understanding that even her less than perfect work was more important in its implications than he had the power to state.

"Can't you do something about the lights, Dan?" she called down. "Hey, are you there? Where the hell are you, Dan?"

Before he could speak, the lights came back on and he could feel her relief, see her pick up the brush and return to work. He didn't bother to answer her question, knowing it wasn't necessary now. It was obvious she had dismissed the interruption as easily as she had dismissed the idea of the reception they were having that night, the small party that was to formally introduce the sketches of Mr. Claybourne, an old-timer in the valley, to his friends and neighbors as well as to prospective buyers from the city. It was also obvious, painfully so, that he was going to have to remind her of it, to broach the lion in her lair, so to speak, to take her by the hand and lead her back for a few necessary hours into the loud, lewd, bawdy boredom of what passed for the real world, because if he didn't there would *be* no real world: no food on the table, no wood for the stove, no stove, in fact, not to mention studio, paint, canvas, brushes. In spite of years of accepting such responsibility a tug of resistance plagued him now. She was becoming more and more separated from the facts of their life. She had no idea how much the city clients enjoyed having her come down from the studio and mingle with them, how much they hoped she would play the "eccentric artist" role so they would have something to talk about among themselves, or to write about when they tired of writing critical comments of her work. And, in all truth, it didn't seem a lot to ask of her, considering what Daniel did for her every day of his life.

He poured himself another drink. It was difficult to see how she could go on refusing to understand how much he needed the freedom that was signified by the marginal living the gallery provided. But then she had not been the one to drudge along for fifteen years of hourly wages in order to support them, in order to finally save enough to make this attempt at a better way of life.

He went into the back room to get a block of ice for the

punch bowl, and began assembling the ingredients for an alcohol-laden punch. He never stinted on this, considering it absolutely the wrong place for economy. If people remembered him at all after such receptions, he wanted it to be for a sense of largesse, of open-handed bonhomie, of unmotivated, unpremeditated good will. It was not only good business, but tax deductible.

Slicing oranges and lemons, he separated the partially thawed strawberries and peach slices, and dropped the fruit into a large punch bowl together with a handful of maraschino cherries, plenty of brandy, plus an equal amount of Benedictine. He then carried the bowl carefully to the table in the center of the gallery and set it behind the rows of cups, and small napkins. Champagne and club soda were in the refrigerator ready to be added as soon as the guests began to arrive. If there *were* any guests, he thought worriedly, listening to the sound of the storm thundering around the building. It was fully dark now, sparing him the experience of seeing the shifting horizon dissolve abruptly into the tons of water pouring out of the sky, of having his perspective tilted just enough so that he had to be continually checking the rooflines of nearby buildings in order to maintain the equilibrium he required.

Suddenly, as though the lines connecting the gallery to the outside world were being torn loose, the lights once more began to flicker. Morosely, Daniel, aware of impatient shuffling in the loft, began a search for candles. He knew it was time to go up and take the brush out of Laurel's hand, but he found himself persisting in his search for the candles which might, after all, be needed at any moment. On the way to the cupboard in the back room, he paused to look once more at one of Mr. Claybourne's cow sketches, and felt a surge of pride, almost as though he had created it himself. It was beautifully done, a private expression of deeply felt reverence toward the more mundane aspects of country life. It deserved to be made public. He knew it, and he also knew that it was not going to be difficult to find the right buyer for any sketch Mr. Claybourne might decide to part with, but he could not forget the challenge in Laurel's impatient, scornful eyes as he had hung the sketches in the gallery. Attention and acclaim were sure to be accorded Mr. Claybourne, and it was almost as though Laurel were jealous, as though she resented what he was doing for the old man. Daniel paused, letting this idea drift across his mind. Jealousy was an emotion not entirely foreign to Laurel, but the few times he had tried to claim her attention in this way, she had not even noticed the provocative situation he had gone to great pains to set up. No, it must be something else. Although he was not guilty of

provocation this time, he began to feel guilty, as though he had neglected doing something basic, something that would have stabilized their relationship into a unique finality. Nervously, he touched the frame of Mr. Claybourne's sketch, the frame he had designed himself to limit, without closing in or diminishing, the life it contained. It was strange how many artists were incapable of understanding that proper framing was also an art—but this was a defensive idea, a red herring thrown in to obscure the real issue: Mr. Claybourne.

He forced himself to recall how it had been the merest of chances which had led him out to the Claybourne ranch in search of Laurel who had left early that morning for a day of painting in the field. If an urgent telephone call from a prospective buyer hadn't come through, he would never have bothered her, and hence would never have seen what she had known was there all along: the treasure of sketches the old ranch house contained.

He frowned. One of the hellish aspects of his life was his ability to recognize talent in what appeared to some people as obscure squiggles of a demented artist's brush or pen. It was a good feeling when this happened, and yet sad, too. In some way, it left him feeling stripped and vulnerable, more so each time it happened until finally, in retaliation, he had found himself standing back for a minute, withholding judgment, not quite considering turning around and walking uncommitted out of Mr. Claybourne's stuffy little parlor with its pile of sketches stacked on the round oak table. Just in time, he had managed to clap his hand on the old man's shoulder and tried to tell him how very good his work was, how unique, how much he wanted to help him. It was a moment of god-like revelation for the old man to see his work in this new light and, for Daniel, it was the absolute closest he would ever come himself to the release of artistic expression, to the freeing of himself from the absorption of beauty: shadows on wet pavement, the changing surface of the light-refracted sea, the simple angle of a cow's body juxtaposed against an empty sky.

And then Laurel, hot flesh sweating, had walked into the dim room, the canvas propped against the porch railing behind her, glowing like the summer sun at noon.

"What are you doing *here*?" she had demanded angrily.

He was not an artist. He was a seller, a purveyor of others' talents. He could not express in a tangible manner what he saw and felt, but that did not mean that he felt less, or saw less. Until he died, he would remember Laurel as she had been at the first gallery showing of her work, walking from canvas to canvas, seeing them finally as he had always seen them, isolated from

the clutter of the studio, pristine in their perfection, contained. Surely that moment had been his creation as much as the paintings had been hers. And after her, he had found other artists, progressing from person to person, from moment to moment as she was progressing from canvas to canvas. And now there was Mr. Claybourne, rancher, widower, raconteur of the old days and the old ways, completely unaware of the quality of what he considered his "doodling." Nothing could have kept Daniel from helping him. It would be a terrible sin for a man to die without understanding the quality of the talent with which he had been born.

"You don't know what you're doing!" Laurel had screamed when they got home. "You're turning him away from what he is! You're separating him from himself! Oh, shit on your gallery, Daniel!"

But later she had come down from her studio and, skilfully maneuvering him into thinking that he was the seducer, had had him drink just enough to blur the edge of his anger and then let him lead her to their bed.

The insolence of her long white body rose again in his mind. Half-asleep, she had rolled away from him onto her side, one leg drawn up, the other extending into the tangle of bed-clothes. A soft patch of down shadowed the base of her spine. Unable to speak, Daniel had put his lips to it, not quite ready to confront the female secret he sensed she was waiting to reveal.

Reaching back, Laurel had put her hand in his hair, letting the tight curls spring around her fingers and, with no thought of sparing him, began to speak.

"You see the way you are, Daniel. There is too much division in you. You think that if what you do is not bad, it is good, when, what it probably is, is good and bad at the same time, and you had better be prepared to accept that responsibility."

"Are you talking about Mr. Claybourne?"

"Partly. Oh, I know you are going to give him a show, but I just want you to understand what else you might be doing."

She rolled toward him. "In case of war, Daniel, each one of us must supply both sides, provide all of the soldiers, bury the dead of both sides in our own body. Which means that you can hang my paintings, or you can burn them. You can hang Mr. Claybourne's cow sketches, or you can walk away and leave him alone. It's all the same. I guess."

"Only to the artist," he said bitterly, "not to the rest of us."

"That's another division. If there is one artist, he or she is in each of us."

"You don't know what you are talking about," Daniel said,

his misery deepening. He lit a cigarette, inhaling slowly. "Do you really want me to forget about Mr. Claybourne?"

"All I know is that he has his own burying to do, and so far he's doing it a lot better than either one of us are."

"You just said it didn't matter if I hang his work or not. You said it's all the same."

"I said, I *guess* it's the same—or it should be." She paused, frowning. "The trouble is that I know more than I can put into practice. It's not easy, Daniel."

"You're jealous, that's what is the matter. You think that if I praise another artist's work, I am taking something away from you. A little old man, Laurel, what threat can he possibly be to an artist of your stature?"

She sat up, folding her arms across her chest. For a second he had the feeling that she was going to laugh at him, and he suffered an impulse to press the glowing end of his cigarette against her soft white breast.

"I need him!" he shouted. "Can't you get that through your stupid head? I *need* Mr. Claybourne!"

THE DOOR BLEW OPEN, and a sheet of rain struck the wood planking of the floor. Daniel looked up to see a small figure done up in a yellow slicker and galoshes, struggling to push the door closed against the thudding wind, but the top hinge seemed to have worked loose, and the door hung at a crazy angle, refusing to be moved. For a moment, Daniel thought it might fall right over, pinning the tiny Mr. Claybourne to the floor and, hurrying forward, he added his weight to the task, and together they managed to get the door back in place. At the same time he noticed that the outside light had burned out, that the only illumination, separated from him by sheets of rain, came from the corner street light half a block away. It suddenly seemed crazy that he should have gone ahead making the punch on a night like this as though people really would drag themselves away from their comfortable homes and come to see the sketches of an old rancher.

"Whew," Mr. Claybourne said, taking off his hat and heading for the stove, his eyes already seeking out the work he had come to see. "It's a bad night to be on the road. A couple of times there I didn't think the truck would make it even in four wheel drive. There's a slide up by the east fork, and a tree down on the lower road. I'm not surprised nobody's here."

But something in his posture allowed Daniel to see that, if not surprised, he was definitely disappointed. He dropped his

slicker on a chair, and wandered over to a corner of the room where he stood staring at one of his sketches as though he had never seen it before.

"By golly, Daniel, you did this up right," he said finally, turning around. "It's like somebody else drew these things. I hardly recognize them."

He moved on, keeping his face averted. Once he took out his handkerchief and blew his nose. Twice he coughed in embarrassment, trying not to show the extent of his pleasure. And Daniel, having gone through this many times before, suddenly discovered that he did not want to be in on this man's revelatory tour of the gallery, that he had had no more to do with what was happening than Mr. Claybourne felt *he* had had to do with his own work.

Hurrying into the back room, he took a bottle of champagne from the refrigerator. Perhaps Laurel had been right. Perhaps he should have left Mr. Claybourne to his silent acres. Perhaps—he put his hand to his head and couldn't go on, because if he kept thinking in this direction, it would mean that he and Laurel—that he had preyed upon Laurel, and that she knew it, and hated him. It would mean that his own nature, clogged by unexpressed emotion, was inherently evil, that, even in the second-hand way of the gallery, expression was to be denied him.

He carried the champagne to the punch bowl, and opened it, the soft pop barely audible above the sound of the rain rattling across the roof. When Laurel approached, it was as if he had never seen her before, never appreciated what she was, never looked beyond the ornament of her talent. But it was too late. Too much that was not good have been revealed.

She looked at him with a puzzled frown, and he saw her as she would be in the years ahead, withdrawing more and more into the life he had forced upon her, needing him more and more to take her by the hand and lead her back into the world for the necessary moments of confrontation that were the basis of her work. And for what artificial purpose? Entertainment of the jaded? Provocative stimulation of the unwary who might then be swept into the evolutionary sea?

The feeling of strangeness doubled. Caught unaware, he was lifted to the tidal crest of pain, carried across the room, and plunged through the window deep into the stormy waters of the bay. Wind howled. Water spouts whirled. There was no support, not even a brief glimpse of the tilting horizon. There was nothing but himself.

"There go the lights," Laurel said, holding a match to the candles. "It's a wonder they stayed on as long as they did."

She walked across the room, bringing a lighted candle to Mr. Claybourne who stood quietly waiting. As she moved away from him, Daniel's pain became acute, but oddly, he was able to bear it. Would it always be so? He did not know. He could not tell. He could only stand there watching with compassion as Laurel held the lighted candle up to one of Mr. Claybourne's sketches, illuminating it for once and all. Then, carefully gauging his forbearance of pain against her future needs, Daniel smiled, and slowly poured the champagne into the punch.

October Song

FLORENCE WEINBERGER

We all know how the seasons drop
from fruit to hail.
Farmers crowd the cities.
Dogs drop their teeth like newspapers
at their masters' feet.
Bells unmanned in idle towers,
stripped of pitch and pattern,
let the wind ring their changes.

You, too, of course,
in all the obvious ways.
Your teeth.
Wind, step, desire, muscle tone.
Your taste in socks.

But sometimes tourists take another road.
Bears roll out of bed.
Perennials splinter rocks in the Mojave.
Picasso leaves a young exhausted widow.
Mae West makes a comeback.
And you come back from the driveway.

The Runaways

T. ALAN BROUGHTON

HE WOKE RELUCTANTLY, opening his eyes and then closing them. He was certain he heard a horse gallop by, but was confused because he had been dreaming about horses, something about feeding them in huge troughs, listening with fear to their hollow chewing, and he had looked over his shoulder to see a horse bearing down on him, head enormous and angry in which the white eyes were entirely rolled back and blank.

A blurring, grayish light filled the room. He was facing his wife's bed, could see the windows over her lumped form, and through them the high branches of the tree and then the distant hillside. It was snowing, and the air was grained with white—the first snow, and for a moment he was aware of a strangely comfortable longing as though if he reached out just slightly some memory would be in his grasp. There had been bells on the wreath of his door at home and they rang as he went in and out; the runners of the sled grated as he pulled it down the concrete steps; his sister was calling (or was it a friend?) and a great black crow hopped along the rim of the hillside and then rose, making the snow puff twice with the brushing of its wingtips. "Don, Donny," that was a woman's voice (his mother's?), and he lay flat on his stomach on the sled, pushed off down the long hill, such a pure white that the contours were lost, flew faster and faster into the white air, wind and snow beating up into his face, and on and on and on, the voices fading behind him, until he closed his eyes and spun through the dark on the rhythm of his falling. The first snow.

He focused again on her bed. Her back was turned him. How long and dark her hair was as though it had spilled onto the pillow from above. Seeing her he awoke fully, flinched, and turned onto his back to stare at the ceiling.

She was leaving today. Or was he leaving? He could not remember what they had finally decided. She had wanted to take their boy, Tom, and go to stay in a motel until she could

find an apartment. But Don had argued with that; he thought she should stay in the house. After all it would be hard enough on Tommy. He could not remember the outcome—perhaps because it made so little difference who stayed where. He was tired and lately only the pills let him sleep.

She had admitted she was in love with someone else. He had been sure of that before last night, although not wanting to hear it directly from her so that he might at least hope that he was merely suspicious and misinterpreting her actions through jealousy. Now their separation was coming again and probably for good this time, and no matter what he did, he could not seem to reach her. Not that she was vindictive or callous. Last night she had wept when she told him, had admitted it was wrong, all wrong, and yet insisted that continuing to live with him was worse. They had talked for hours. Don found himself vacillating between an anger that made him stand above her pale and trembling, barely able to resist bringing both fists down on her bloated, teary face, and a blank state of paralysis in which he would collapse in the armchair facing her to listen to her go over the facts again and again. He had known those trips to Montreal were a ruse. But he tried to explain he was unable to root her out of his mind. "Call that love, if you like," he said to her bitterly on their way upstairs. Grabbing her by the arm while she looked down at him from a few stairs above he whispered hoarsely, "I can't just cut you out."

He turned his head to the window. Once again he was sure he heard horses' hooves, muffled by the snow. He wondered how deep it was. They were fine flakes, the kind that could continue for days, and from time to time they flicked against the window. He thought he could hear Tommy begin to rock nervously in his bed. They would all have to get up soon. Then what? Don felt sick. He closed his eyes and held his breath until he grew dizzy. He should get up and take some librium. It was the only way to get through it. For Tommy's sake it would have to be done well, almost casually. Then, after he had gone, or they, he could let go, whatever that meant. For a second he felt separated from his own life. This was not credible. All the mornings he had wakened, half-knowing that this morning would come and that the even worse one would follow when he would wake to find the other bed empty or to stare at the vacant screen of a television in some motel, seemed like someone else's life.

He heard the horse again and sat up with a jerk. This time there was a whinny too. He swung out of bed and went to the window. He saw the hind quarters flick around the corner of the house. There were prints of horseshoes all over the snow on the

front lawn and one of the bushes had been trampled down. Don glanced across the road, saw that the door to the barn where the Wilsons were keeping their horses was open. The face of another horse was in the doorway. They were not all out yet. If he could close the door he might keep them in. He began putting his shirt and pants on over his pajamas. She stirred slightly, then made a sound as though she had started.

"What is it?"

He turned to see her face raised, the covers still up to her chin.

"Horses getting loose." He did not want to talk to her, even see her.

"Oh," and the head disappeared.

He put on his boots hastily and lashed the laces around his ankles. At the door he paused, leaned for a moment on one hand and then said, "I'm going down to see if I can get them into the barn again."

He heard her turning over. When he looked back she was facing him, her eyes wide. He knew she was fully awake now, as much aware of it all as he had been.

"All right," and the gentleness said that nothing had changed.

"Then we can talk some more," he said.

But her head shook slowly. "We can't. Tommy will be up. Besides there's no use talking."

"Donna," and he stepped toward her until his knees touched the bed between them. "Listen to me. It makes no sense. I can't understand it all."

She shut her eyes. "Not again."

He could not stand talking to her face with its eyes closed. "Jesus, Jesus," he muttered and left the room, knocking his shoulder on the doorjamb as though he were drunk.

Tommy had his face in the crack of his bedroom door. "Snow," he said as his father passed.

Don saw the strange look in his son's eyes and said, "Yes," too loudly.

"Can we build a snowmen?"

Don kept going. "Maybe, later," and he was halfway down the stairs.

Outside he paused on the porch steps, turning his face up to the snow that pricked him, then he walked out onto the lawn. It was deeper than he had thought it would be, almost over the tops of his boots. He could not see the stray horse and guessed it must have gone around the back again. But he decided to close the door first, then lure back the one already out. The Wilsons

rode the horses so infrequently they were wilder than most, and already that Fall they had broken out twice and gone into Mr. Campbell's apple orchard.

He crossed the road and went through the snowplow drift to the barn door. He paused on the threshold, unable to see into the dark, smelling the old hay and fresh horse manure, the warm and fetid air where the animals had been stabled all night. He stepped inside.

Immediately he saw the face of a horse to his right peering at him intently, then gradually the others, four more, all of them scattered around the small room and holding perfectly still, staring at him with large, unblinking eyes. Finally one of them snorted.

Don stepped into the middle of the room. So only one was out then. He counted again to be sure. Still they did not move. Then one of them stamped a foot. A harness jingled. Don turned slightly, saw the hind quarters of a horse disappearing through the door and watched the others begin moving heavily toward the opening.

"Hey," and he leapt toward the door.

But already another one had his head and shoulders partway through. Don came up to its side, tried to pull back on the shoulder. The horse, moving slowly and as though unaware of Don, kept pushing forward, stepped on his foot as he passed by and then was out into the snow. The next horse nudged Don's shoulder with his nose. This time he turned, pushed against the horse's front with both of his hands. The horse moved forward slowly but without strain. He put his shoulder against it. But the whole ground simply moved under him. The horse was too strong. Don tried to reach the door to close it, was pushed aside by the horse so that he fell inside against a post.

For a second he lay there. The horses seemed to loom above him—dark, unrecognizable beasts. Now they snorted, pushed against each other in their eagerness to be out. He watched until there was one left, a large black horse.

Don stood. The horse held still on the threshold, turned his face lazily toward him as though curious.

"Go," Don said, his voice choking up in him. "Go on. Beat it. Get out of here."

The horse did not move, its nostrils widening slightly. Don rushed it, struck at its side twice with his fist as hard as he could, heard the horse whinny, and then the giant hip brushed him as it thrust for the door and out. Don stumbled after it into the snow. The horse was there. He rushed it again. It shied but he struck its side, chased it up toward the barn wall.

"Go on," he was yelling, "go on."

The horse, trapped against the barn, reared back, whinnied, and Don, looking up past the flailing hooves, could see the huge face, nostrils wide, bright teeth showing, and the eyes rolled white and blank. The hooves missed him but the horse in coming down and lurching forward struck him with its shoulder and spun him off into the snow. He lay there for a moment. The snow had fallen into his shirt and down the back of his neck. His hands were numb. He raised himself to a kneeling position.

Down across the field he could see the black horse galloping straight into the white as if still pursued. The snow rose about his hooves and he ran until he was very small then turned and stood tossing his head. Far to the right a crow slanted toward the elm tree where it came to rest as though the lacework of bare limbs had netted it.

Don closed his eyes. At first he felt the bruises sharply along his side and shoulder. But then he lost his sense of them. There was the sound of the runners briefly on cement. He had Tommy with him and they poised for a moment on the top of the hill. It was nighttime and the snow sloped off grayly into the dark at a precipitous slant. Someone was calling them. "Donny. Come back here." His mother? Donna? He pushed off with one foot. "Whee," Tommy said, "whee." Then they were silent. There was only the brushing of the runners on the snow. They fell swiftly into the dark. They seemed to go on forever.

He opened his eyes and stood up. His feet were numb too. Let the horses go then. They weren't his. He'd call Wilson and let him try to find them. Probably all over the county by now. Already the hoofprints in the front yard were filling with snow. He paused on the porch, looked back at the field. Two of the horses were trudging off over the white ridge, necks sloped downwards.

Tommy was downstairs in the hallway, sliding about in the wool feet of his pajamas. He could hear Donna in the kitchen.

"Can we make snowmens?"

Don did not answer. His son's face rounded with surprise.

"Horse," he said and pointed.

Through the narrow window by the door they saw the dappled creature standing broadside as if posing for a sculpture, and then something spooked it, and it sprang and galloped away.

"Yes," Don said only to reassure his son that what he had seen was not a vision.

"Tommy? Don?" His wife calling. "Breakfast is ready."

He let Tom go first, his diapered hips swaying topheavily, arms swinging out around them. Not really leaving. He couldn't

really be going. He paused at the dining room window. Maybe the storm would prevent them from doing anything more. A blizzard. Snowed in for weeks. They'd talk, make love, forget this strange fifth act that someone else had written for them. These weren't their lives.

"Don? Your coffee's poured."

They all sat down. She was in her wrapper, hair drawn back tightly into a ponytail. Tommy was pouring cinnamon sugar liberally onto his toast.

"They all got out," Don muttered. Something needed to be said. "All the horses. I've bruised my foot. One stepped right on me."

"Do they eat peoples?" Tom said, his face smeared with powdered brown.

He did not want to talk with the boy. He wanted her to speak, to have to look at him, see him as human. He knew she was avoiding him, would until he was on the porch, packed to go.

"Horses don't eat people, Tommy," she said. "You know that."

"They stepped on Daddy."

"Hard."

"Oh, Don. Now, you'll just get him worried, like you did with the rat. Then he'll dream."

The rat had come up from the cellar after it had eaten the poison—it was late Fall—a brown field rat, cowering half-blind with pain in a corner of the living room, nose twitching. He'd sent them both out of the room, closed the door. What to do. He hoped to lift it on the shovel, get it out the window. But it was too lively for that. He had to kill it. He raised the shovel in both hands over the creature and as if it were an ice chopper, jabbed down with all his strength. A choked shrill, as if a tire had been punctured, the limbs stretching out, and then blood, issuing from its nose and mouth and anus, staining forever the oak wood with a brown splotch. The others had heard the scream.

"Horses are not mean or cruel, Tom," he said with heavy precision. "They are entirely a benefit to mankind. Before the advent of the tractor . . ."

"Oh, stop it."

He did. It was going all wrong. He had not intended the sarcasm for his son, who did not understand the words but frowned at the tone.

"They won't hurt you, Tom," and he sipped his coffee, already very cool.

"Daddy and me make a snowmen today."

She had gotten up to go to the stove for another cup of tea.

He wanted to see her face, but her back was turned.

"Your Daddy has to go somewhere today," she said simply.

So he was the one to go. For a moment he considered refusing. He'd get a lawyer. She could go to her lover, leave him with Tommy. That was only fair. She'd think twice if she had to give up their son also. But it was useless. She would just pack and take Tommy and go. It had happened that way the first time they separated, and then he'd had to go to her motel, beg her to go back and let him be the one to stay elsewhere. At least with her in the house, their house, there was a chance. But damn it, she was stubborn.

"Where? Where is Daddy going?"

Neither of them answered. A muffled pounding went by somewhere beyond the wall.

"Can't you catch them, or something?" she said and turned at last.

"I tried. They don't just come when you call."

She did not turn away.

"I'll telephone the Wilsons. They're their horses, not ours. I'm not up for being crushed by someone else's animals."

"Well, maybe you could tell the Wilsons to keep them somewhere else while you're at it. I'm sick of having those crazy things getting out. It's gotten so I'm scared to let Tommy play outside sometimes for fear they'll . . ."

"Horses hurt Tommy?"

"Oh, damn . . ." and she turned to lean on the stove, her elbows stiff.

He felt the usual paralysis at her anger, the injustice of her being angry at him. Weren't his horses. He knew nothing about horses.

"Horses hurt Tommy?"

"No," he yelled suddenly, surprised at himself, and watched Tom's face whiten, collapse, the sobs welling up, his awkward body clambering down from the chair to waddle over and clasp his mother's leg.

"Don, for heaven's sake."

He stood, leaned down to lift Tommy and the boy accepted him, burrowing his head against his neck. He stared at Donna's face.

"I'm jumpy," he said.

Tom squirmed and he set him down. She was still staring at him.

"Please go. Please get it over with. Don't let's draw it out."

"We have to talk."

She shook her head.

"There's much more to be said. We've just started. You've got to let me talk to you."

She shook her head.

"This is insane. It's all too fast."

"Fast? It's been years," and she sounded terribly weary.

"I can't. I just can't." Something was coming up in him, from somewhere deep in his spine a pressure rose gradually. "Talk to me."

She shook her head.

"Talk—to—me."

Again her head moving, and then as if it were someone else's hand that had come hurtling into view, he saw it lash across her face, felt a tooth dig into his knuckle and saw her lean back against the stove, her mouth open and one lip bleeding. The wail did not come from her, but below. He looked down, saw the face of his son, and then the small figure scuttling as fast as it could out of the room, wailing still.

"Oh, my God, my God," she was saying, but he paid no attention to her.

He found Tommy in the back of the hall closet. He had pulled the hems of the coats about his head tightly and would not let go.

"Tommy listen. Now it's important you hear me, son. Sometimes people get very angry at each other, even people who love each other very much . . ." and he heard himself sweeping on, words tumbling in a quiet, tense voice about them, and Tommy shook his head from time to time, finally stared suspiciously at his father through the clothes, but would not let go, his face set and hard.

When she appeared behind them, Tom held out both his arms and she stooped to take him. Her face stared at Don over Tommy, her lip swollen but no longer bleeding.

"I love you," he said.

"I know."

"Let me stay."

"No."

It was rising again. He turned quickly and walked upstairs. He could hear her talking to Tommy below. She would be saying what he had tried to say also. No harm. Don't worry. Sometimes people get angry. Even when there's love. Her flesh had parted to him. The short flat stroke downward. Blood. The flesh only covered it. The horses whirled by once again. The snow was endless. It would go on and on. The flesh parted and there was blood.

Even when there's love.

The Runner

MICHAEL WATERS

1

This morning for miles his heart
churns blood like water,
lungfish boat in his ribs.
He aches with the animals
that turn the wheel toward sleep.
All night their dumb cries

beat in his chest, prod him
into taking turns like dreams
he remembers too well, too fast.
For these he leans toward the top
of each rise, beyond the next curve.
Some mornings it seems he'll never stop.

2

If something in our stride
can carry us to the next world,
or teach us to hold all desire,
the runner feels that spirit
break from his breath like a prayer.
He kneels as an image of death

springs past his mind,
and hugs himself
as if to keep from rising.
Then he remembers he's never run
this far, so fast, and learns to live
this life like it was the last.

Judy Garland

MICHAEL WATERS

My mother tells me the winter I was six
I met Judy Garland in Rockefeller Center.
We were watching the ice-skaters circle
their small white faces near the tree
when our own Christmas star appeared.

Now each winter I return to New York
I look for a familiar face in the crowd.
Sometimes I think I remember Judy Garland—
she was almost fat and smoking a cigarette.
But I must be mistaken—mother tells me so.

Once, approaching me on 57th Street,
a plump woman smiled and called me "Michael."
I almost followed her into the subway.
Then I saw death's face whiten and stare
in the frost her breath left circling the air.

A Memory Not Quite Abandoned

MARY NORTON KRATT

Wrung from my silent wandering
a ringing churchbell tilts me back:
hoisted from the bare oak floor
father helps me reach and pull the bellcord
hard and heavy as a muscled arm
then lifts me to a quiet swinging
sound surrounded
could I have caused
the ringing that calls out to countryside
 come come
all these years I have been listening
 come come
for bells to ring me home
to something larger than a sound
a skylight opened to the past
like sharp intake of woodsmoked winter air.

Happy Birthday

JUDY CROWE

EDGAR SCOWLED at the runny white of the soft-boiled egg and watched it disappear under the small, neat bits of toast that Claire was tearing off and dropping into the bowl. She stirred the toast into the eggs and handed the spoon to Edgar. He saw her frown at him, as if he were a boy sprinkling an extra spoonful of sugar onto his cornflakes, saying, "No more salt," as he shook an extra dash onto the egg and toast she'd already salted. Edgar grunted. He ate quickly and noted Claire's tongue-click as he dropped a piece of egg-soggy toast onto his lap. He stirred some milk, damn powdered stuff, into his Postum, shoved his bowl aside, and reached for the morning paper.

The date at the top of the paper nagged at him. July 8. Her birthday, sixty-one today. Not that he'd forgotten. He was very good about dates. He'd been thinking about her birthday for days, but hadn't decided what to do about it. If he had other faults, he had always remembered their anniversary and her birthday with at least a card. Of course, last year he was still in the hospital after the stroke and didn't even know when her birthday came and went. She probably hadn't thought of it herself and wouldn't expect him to this year either.

He looked across the table at her as she studied the grocery ads. Her hair, white since she was forty, was soft and fluffy around her face. She was a bit plump and the lines and wrinkles in her face and hands were soft, and Edgar thought that she still looked young. Looking long into those soft lines and the frame of white hair he could see the picture of a younger, slimmer Claire, dark-haired and pretty, that he had married forty years ago. He knew the difference in their ages showed more than ever now; Edgar was seventy-five and envied Claire's youth and agility. And he resented, sometimes, her mothering, fixing his food, doling out his medicines, scolding him.

And yet in many ways, he enjoyed it all as he played at being senile. He designed gestures and cultivated mannerisms to

make the most of his limp and weak right side, no longer paralyzed, but still slow and clumsy. He liked to study his face in the mirror, pleased to discover that he could nearly control his drooping right eye and the downward curl of the right side of his mouth, yet even more pleased with the sinister looks he could put on, squinting his eyes and dragging his lip down until his teeth and part of the wet gum showed at the corner. He exaggerated the limp, carrying the cane he knew he didn't need, and dragging his right leg. He liked to walk around like that, watching people watching him, collecting pitying stares and thoughtless remarks.

The stroke had affected his speech; he couldn't talk at all for weeks. He could talk now, of course, but had chosen not to tell anyone, not the doctors, not Claire. Especially not Claire. What was there to talk about? It was bad enough that she chattered constantly at him, but he could tune her voice out, didn't have to make responses to her ridiculous, meaningless, everyday talk. And since she, along with everyone else, assumed that his mind had also been damaged by the stroke, an assumption he was careful to encourage with his peculiar gestures and noises, the grunts and groans, which along with nods of his head and pointed fingers served as his substitutes for speech, Claire was content to care for him and expect nothing from him. He felt fortunate to be free of the banalities of tiresome conversations and worn-out friendships, free to think undisturbed, free merely to sit with his mind clear and empty, at peace. Best of all was his knowledge that his mind was as sharp now as it had been at thirty or forty, and he exercised it by adding columns of figures in his head, checked himself on historical dates, and watched all of the game shows on television, knowing most of the answers before the contestants did.

Yes, the stroke had been a blessing. He was left alone now and wanted to continue to be left alone. So he hadn't talked to anyone, not the grocer, not the waitresses in the coffee shop across from the park, not the old men who played dominoes, not even aloud to himself since he had gotten out of the hospital. How could he be sure Claire wouldn't find out? How could he know that one of her pinochle-playing or church-going friends wouldn't hear him and report to Claire?

Claire was asking, "Ready for your shave now?" He nodded and moved from his chair at the table to the one she had placed at the kitchen sink. As he sat down she draped the dish-towel around his neck, pinning it tight. She was humming as she lathered up the brush and covered his face with soap. He supposed he could shave himself, especially if he used the

electric shaver his daughter Joanne and her husband Phil had given him, or rather given Claire to use on him while he was still in the hospital. When he was recovering from the stroke, Claire would shave him with his old Gillette during her daily visits. Edgar had refused the electric shaver when they brought it, turning his face into the pillow, and it sat now in the box in the bureau drawer. He liked the feeling of being pampered as Claire shaved him or trimmed his hair; he didn't even mind her chattering or humming then. And he liked to tease her, twitching the muscles in his cheek as she pulled the razor across his face. She always jumped and scolded him, but she'd never cut him.

Her soft heavy breast rested now on his shoulder and he could smell the sweet and familiar smell of her breath. He wondered, as he did from time to time, if his crochety behavior, his little games, were cruel to Claire. But he thought that he wasn't being cruel at all, for she seemed to like taking care of him. She often told him as she shaved him or shampooed his hair, probably not knowing if he knew what she was saying or not, that she was glad to be able to care for him at home. Caring for him gave her something to do. After all, he thought, playing cards and gossiping and sitting in church and shopping and cleaning their little apartment only killed so many hours a week for her.

She was wiping his face now with a hot wet towel, telling him, "When you get back, I'll be going to Ruth's place, you know." That meant he was not to stay too long in the park, that he was to be home in time for his lunch and nap, or Claire would come looking for him and lead him home.

He walked to the park almost every day. It was just a short way and the doctor had recommended that he walk. At first, Claire had walked with him and then, for awhile, she followed behind to make sure that he knew where he was going and that he looked both ways before he crossed the streets. Now he walked alone. It was very warm today and the city was beginning to smell. He had been glad to come home from the hospital to the apartment in the city, glad to be out of the suburbs, and especially glad that Joanne and Phil had taken care of the sale of the house and had moved Claire while he was in the hospital. The house and yard had become all chore and no pleasure. But, he thought now, at least it hadn't been smoggy and smelly there.

By the time he reached the shaded walks that lined the park, his head had begun to perspire under his hat and he wished he hadn't worn his jacket. He walked toward the table where the domino players sat, two old men, Italians, Edgar thought, who spent most of their days at this table playing dominoes or, once

in awhile, checkers. Edgar sat at the end of the bench; the men looked up and nodded at him as they always did. Edgar nodded back.

The fat one wearing a gray cap, Joe, laid a six next to a six at the end of the line and said, "Ha, I'm up on you."

The thinner man with still-dark curly hair whose name Edgar didn't know, shook his head and murmured, "We'll see. We'll see. I got a surprise or two here."

"It better be good. Just look at the points."

"Don't you worry." He paused and scratched his head. "Did you see them clouds this morning? Thunderheads."

"Yeah, they blew off. Far off, I hope. Come on, I don't got all day, you know."

From time to time as they bantered back and forth, they glanced at Edgar. He wondered if they thought he was crazy. They had asked him to play at first and tried to talk to him, but he had just grunted and shrugged his shoulders as if he had no idea what they were talking about. And now they left him alone. Edgar shook his head and chuckled to himself. Couple of old duffers playing kids' games and sounding like old hens. Like Claire and her old biddy friends. He stood up and walked over to the benches near the children's playground.

A young woman sat at the end of a bench, jiggling a baby buggy with her foot as she read a newspaper. Edgar stopped in front of her, staring down at her, and sat down in the middle of the bench. He watched as she fidgeted for a few minutes and finally got up and wheeled the buggy to another bench.

He remembered that he still hadn't thought of an idea for Claire's birthday present. He couldn't buy much. He only had about seventy cents left out of the money Claire gave him for his peppermints and his magazines. Maybe just a card. He wished he could think of something else, especially since he'd missed last year. After all, he had loved her, probably did love her still. He was just so tired of it all, tired of her, tired of himself. Bored. Some days he would sit in the park and think of wild, outrageous things to do. He pictured himself climbing up on the bench, waving his hat and cane, and shouting some obscene slogan. But he imagined that would only get him to one of those rest homes that Joanne and Claire's friends kept talking about.

Edgar realized that a child was standing in front of his bench, the little girl he'd noticed in the sandbox earlier. He stared back at her and was surprised by the thought that she looked very much like Joanne had at that age. She was three or four, he guessed, dressed in pink courduroy coveralls, dirty with play, scuffed white hightop shoes, and a white sweater.

Yes, Joanne had had those same brown-almost-gold eyes and the same very straight brown hair.

He often thought he should have been a better father, and he sometimes wished, or at least he used to wish, that Joanne and Phil had had children, that they hadn't been so involved in their jobs and their house. But it was probably just as well that he had no grandchildren; he didn't like children. Hadn't Claire always used to nag at him to pay more attention to Joanne when she was little? But it was all such a nuisance, first diapers and bottles, then dolls and swings, always something broken, always something to buy, and then giggling girlfriends and dull, sports-talking, bragging boyfriends.

Her nose was running, two clear drops about to fall over her upper lip. She was watching his face and he squinted his eye and curled his lip down a little more. Her chubby cheeks were chapped and red and Edgar decided that she didn't look much like Joanne after all; Joanne had been a very thin child and was probably taller at three or four than this little girl. He felt a surprising, over-almost-before-it-was-there impulse to take out his handkerchief and wipe her nose. Just then, not taking her eyes from his face, she raised her arm suddenly, as if the elbow and wrist were pulled up by strings, wiping at her nose with her sweater sleeve and spreading the wet shiny film across her cheek.

Edgar leaned slowly toward her, as though he were about to tell her a secret or to kiss the top of her head. When his face was down next to hers, he made a terrible face and hissed, "Boo!" She shrieked and ran across the playground, disappearing through the trees.

Edgar chuckled and pulled the rolled-up magazine out of his jacket pocket. *National Geographic*, July, 1969. He had a couple of hundred issues and liked to pull one out at random and read about different peoples and places. How much more real they seemed than the people he and Claire had met and the places they'd seen after he'd retired, been forced to retire at sixty-five. He'd given forty-five years to their goddamn refrigerators and they wouldn't let him stay even one extra year. So Claire had dragged him first to Hawaii and then to Europe. Both times he had made her come home early. All he remembered now were the dusty trains, perspiring passengers, the dull folksy tourists he hoped he and Claire didn't resemble, sunburns and sore feet, strange food and stomach upsets. Better to sit at home, or here in the park in the shade, and read about "Switzerland, Europe's High-Rise Republic" or "New Guinea: Festival of Faces" and not have to suffer through it all.

EDGAR READ for awhile until he realized he was getting hungry. He checked his watch and found that he had nearly an hour before he was due home. And, he remembered, he still didn't know what to do about Claire's birthday. Seventy cents. Maybe he should go to the five-and-dime across the street and find some little trinket. He'd bought a scarf at the dime store for her twenty-fifth birthday. Paid about a quarter for it. Joanne was a baby and there wasn't much money, so he'd bought that cheap scarf and a card, wishing he could buy something better. But Claire liked the scarf, or said she did. It was just the shade of green to match her eyes and she wore it often, around her neck tucked into the front of her blouse or tied about her head to hold her hair back.

But would could he buy now for seventy cents? Maybe he should just tell her "Happy Birthday." Let her know he'd remembered. Of course. He pictured the look on her face, surprised and pleased. But, then what? Bored as he might be at times, he didn't want to fall into the trap of actually having to talk to her again. Maybe if he said it real slow and not too plain, she'd think he'd been practicing for weeks. That wouldn't necessarily give him away, wouldn't reveal that he could really talk. Claire would probably tell Joanne and her friends, but she wouldn't embarrass him, wouldn't ask him to say it for them to hear. And that would be it, until he decided, if he ever did, to talk again. Yes, he smiled to himself, that would be Claire's birthday present.

That was settled and he had enough time for a piece of pie. He wasn't supposed to have pie, of course, but a couple of times a month he crossed the street to the coffee shop for a piece of apple pie. It never seemed to bother his stomach and he always chewed peppermints afterward so Claire wouldn't know.

The tall, homely waitress with the blue-black hair greeted him as he sat at his usual booth. "Hi, Gramps. Pretty out today." She set a big piece of apple pie and a glass of ice water on the table. Edgar ate slowly, savoring each cinnamon spicy bite, thinking of his birthday surprise for Claire. He decided to wait until suppertime, say it just as they sat down to eat. He left the thirty-five cents for the pie and walked home.

Claire was upset because he wouldn't eat any lunch. Not hungry after having eaten the pie, he pushed his plate aside, shaking his head. He did drink some tomato juice though, to make her happy and to make her stop fretting, "Eat, Edgar, Got to keep your strength up."

She pulled down the shades in the bedroom and turned on

the fan, fluffed his pillow as he stretched out on the bed and leaned over him to unbutton the top button of his shirt. "Now you sleep tight. I won't be too long and Mrs. Woods is home. If you need something, you just call her. Know what, Daddy? We're going to try canasta today. The new girl Marge likes it better. Hope I remember how to play. We used to play with, was it the Snells, yes the Snells, remember? But, heavens, that was so long ago. Oh, well Ruth and Helen haven't played in awhile either. Guess I'd better go now. You sleep tight."

And then she was gone; Edgar could hear her chattering through the apartment until the door closed behind her.

He must have slept a long time; he could hear Claire clattering pots and pans and shutting doors and drawers in the kitchen. He was hungry now and remembered that he was going to tell her "Happy Birthday." He wondered if he should save it until bedtime say it just as she was falling asleep. But that wouldn't work because Joanne would probably call later, after the rates had gone down, to wish her a happy birthday. And he wanted to surprise Claire; he was sure she had forgotten her own birthday. It had to be now. He lay still for a minute, feeling pleased with himself for always having remembered her birthday, except for last year, but that didn't count. He thought of the green scarf again and wondered what had happened to it. It was probably tucked away in a box or a drawer.

Claire called from the kitchen, "Edgar, you'll sleep your life away! Supper's about ready!"

He got up, stretched, and walked out to the kitchen. She asked, "Good nap, Daddy?" Edgar nodded and sat in his chair.

Claire put a bowl of split pea soup in front of him and arranged a few crackers on a plate with cottage cheese and peaches. "Marge won today, you might know," she said. "I'll get the hang of it again, though. It was kind of fun for a change. Don't know why we've just been playing pinochle all this time." She sat finally and continued to talk. Edgar held up his hand to stop her chatter. "What is it?" she asked.

Edgar held her eyes with his and thought, "Well, Happy Birthday, Claire," and said, "Hnnnnnn Booooo."

Claire said "I know it's soup again, but it's a few days until the check comes."

Edgar shook his head fiercely. What was wrong. He *should* have practiced! He tried again, thinking, "Happy Birthday, Claire," and heard himself say, "Hnnnnnn Booooo."

Claire looked perplexed. I'm sorry Edgar. Would you rather have chicken soup? Or I could fix you an egg."

Edgar's face grew hot and he felt perspiration come to

his brow and to his hands. Damn rusty pipes. He banged his fist on the table, bouncing his spoon onto the floor. Claire got up to retrieve it, scolding him now, "Daddy, you just stop that. I'm sorry about the soup. I'll fix whatever you like. I declare, there's no need to get so worked up."

Edgar took a deep breath, saw the letters clearly in his mind — H A P P Y B I R T H D A Y — focused on them, concentrated on the sound of the words, and, as he opened his mouth, saw them fade and disappear; he knew he couldn't say them. He pushed the bowl of soup onto the floor and lay his head on his arms on the table, feeling the unfamiliar burning of tears coming to his eyes. "Damn, damn, damn," he thought and heard the groan-whine of what should have been his voice, as Claire, hovering over him, patting his head, feeling his forehead, asked, "Are you sick, Edgar? You go lie down and I'll fix you something to eat later."

Poem For Jeanne

TIM DLUGOS

I am afraid of the country,
too. It is not the distances
that frighten me—it is
the way we can be part of
the scene so easily. Rooted

like the trees in a particular
yard. Standing in the darkness
after the film runs out. Our
hands can be nameless. Our branches
can bud anytime. Suddenly

we can be breathing, as
slowly as the trees. Then
someone will cry out in
the silence, and we will be
startled, and faced with it.

Responses to War:

Ford Madox Ford
and Evelyn Waugh

DONALD HABERMAN

THE TWO GREAT wars of this century have created in the turmoil around them apparently fundamental changes in English life, particularly English social life, but few British writers have made any substantial imaginative effort to recreate in fiction the process itself of those changes. Many novelists have assumed the disintegration and chaos that followed (or preceded) the wars, but it is almost as though the traditional British novel did not allow for the nature of the changes as they developed. Anthony Powell's *A Dance to the Music of Time* comes to mind as the single major effort to encompass the upheavals of both wars, but partly because that work is still unfinished and partly because of the mysterious character of the narrator, it is difficult to gauge its success. The two outstanding long works, one for each war, are Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End*¹ and Evelyn Waugh's *Sword of Honor*.²

The larger outline of the development of both these novels is an old and reliable one, and it is the pattern of the spiritual journey of the hero. As in Dante's *Commedia*, for example, the hero finds himself lost in a Dark Wood suffering a profound despair; he glimpses a shining goal, but he is unable to find an easy path to that joy; he must first undergo a kind of symbolic suffering and death, gaining new knowledge, before he can enter Paradise. If the heroes of *Parade's End* and *Sword of Honor* do not reach the glories of Dante's Celestial Paradise, they do find a personal *Paradiso Terrestre*, and each discovers there for himself a Beatrice of whom he has been dreaming. Both Ford

1 Ford Madox Ford, *Parade's End* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961). This edition will be used for reference; page numbers appearing in parenthesis refer to it.

2 Evelyn Waugh, *Sword of Honor* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1965). This edition will be used for reference; page numbers appearing in parenthesis refer to it.

and Waugh have written modern versions of the religious pilgrimage. What is remarkable is how alike in detail as well as in general outline the novels are. Waugh's novel is so like Ford's that it is possible that Waugh was consciously following Ford's lead as he dealt with his own war. It might be interesting but it is not of any crucial importance to establish this with certainty, and I make no such claim. However, the similarity of the one work to the other is so great that a comparison of them illuminates both.

The hero of *Parade's End*, Christopher Tietjens, is remarkable for many things, but probably he is most remarkable for the energy with which he is persecuted by other men. Many explanations, all partial and really all unsatisfactory, are offered for his unjust suffering at the hands of others: he has conscious desires for saintliness (The name Christopher is a clue.), and he is tormented for his religious glow; he maintains a vaguely superior morality, irritating to other weaker men; his greater intelligence is insufferable; his indifference to others, including his wife, rouses their fury to such a level that they feel they can exist for him only insofar as they cause him pain. Though he is born to a secure and established position in English society—he is a Gentleman—Tietjens is in almost every way an outsider.

Guy Crouchback, Waugh's hero, is equally a Gentleman, and he also shares Tietjens' outsider condition. Waugh does not bother with explanations.

He was not loved, Guy knew, either by his household or in the town. He was accepted and respected but he was not *simpatico*. . . . Guy alone was a stranger. . . . (p. 18)

Although both men by birth occupy an important place in their societies, they are uncomfortable there, and because they do not fit in and identify with the role established for them, they expose not only themselves, but the human world others take for granted as well.

THE SCOPE OF Ford's novel is large, and the despair from which Tietjens emerges is social as well as personal. His story begins before the war during the glamorous but illusory calm of Edwardian and Georgian England. The society is complacently deceiving and self-deceived. The novel begins with a rich counterpoint to this complacency. Two suffragettes making an attempt to force the recognition by a government minister of the ugly conditions that working women must endure, intrude themselves onto the week-end peace of gentlemen's golf links. As it turns out, the men golfing that day are not gentlemen; two

are obscene bullies who are restrained with only partial success. They will never be asked to return, but because the club does not like scenes, they are not asked to leave. Tietjens, a government statistician, has been asked by this same minister who is the target of the suffragettes, not precisely to fake, but to arrange figures to support a program the government wishes adopted. Tietjens' godfather, General Campion, an important military, government, and social personage reprimands him for what he considers his "rudeness" to superiors in refusing the job. The demands of "the discipline of a service" come first. Later Campion scolds Tietjens again, this time about his relationship with women—which if it is not the single major theme of the novel, is surely one of the most important. Campion does not object to Tietjens' running after easy women: "I heard a woman in the promenade of the Empire say once that it was the likes of them that saved the lives and figures of all the virtuous women of the country." (p. 74) His objection is against the respectable girl he incorrectly believes Tietjens has chosen and his lack of discretion: "choose a girl that you can set up in a tobacco shop and do your courting in the back parlor." (p. 74) Ironically Tietjens' truth is not believed. "Damn it all . . . it's the first duty of all Englishmen—to be able to tell a good lie in answer to a charge." (p. 72) Campion must arrange what comfort he can from what he assumes is Tietjens' incompetence at lying: "Then I'll take it that you tell me a lie meaning me to know that it's a lie. That's quite proper." (p. 72) "An obvious lie [will suffice] as long as it shows you're not flying in the face of society." (p. 74)

The illusion of a sound society must be maintained. The deceptions about women and men and their sexual relationship are partly owed to the culture of the nineteenth century. Vincent Macmaster, Tietjens' slightly younger friend, in order to promote admiration for himself among ladies with influential drawing rooms and thereby further his career, has written a "little monograph" on Gabriel Charles Dante Rossetti, one, as Macmaster has it "who has profoundly influenced the outward aspects, the human contacts, and all those things that go to make up the life of our higher civilization as we know it today." (p. 14) Like so much of Ford's complex irony, this is true and not true. Tietjens expresses his contempt for Rossetti's poetic "attempts to justify fornication," (p. 17) and then develops through a delicate but complicated web of allusions to Rossetti's poetry an argument that contrasts Rossetti's sordid reality with the high minded moralizing attitudes of the poems, condemning both, one for its brutishness, the other for its hypocrisy. He allows Macmaster his

respectable flirtations with the influential ladies. And though he has nothing but contempt for the sham sexual morality of the late nineteenth century poetry, Tietjens praises the relative honesty of the novels of that time, humorously rearranging a quotation from *The Spoils of Poynton* along the way, thereby recognizing Henry James's achievement and associating the loss of human values with the mad pursuit of things and selfish pleasure.

The lower classes, . . . such of them as get through the secondary schools, want irregular and very transitory unions. During holidays they go together on personally conducted tours to Switzerland and such places. Wet afternoons they pass in their tiled bathrooms slapping each other on the backs and splashing white enamel paint about. (p. 19)

The lower class enamel splashers are more honest and healthier than that middle class, associated with bad poetry, that had traditionally been responsible for governing England—those people, and Ford parodies Rossetti again, who "lead the contemplative . . . the circumspect life." (p. 19) When Macmaster protests smugly that "*We—the circumspect—yes, the circumspect classes, will pilot the nation through the tight places,*" (p. 20) Tietjens objects:

Firstly there's you fellows who can't be trusted. And then there's the multitude who mean to have bathrooms and white enamel. Millions of them; all over the world. . . . And there aren't enough bathrooms and white enamel in the world to go round. It's like your polygamists with women. There aren't enough women in the world to go round to satisfy your insatiable appetites. And there aren't enough men in the world to give each woman one. And most women want several. So you have divorce cases. I suppose you won't say that because you're so circumspect and right there shall be no more divorce? Well, war is as inevitable as divorce . . . (pp. 20-21)

Ford touches on almost every major theme in the entire work here: the general deceit of the society, the failure of any honest morality, the failure of the ruling classes, the failure of the traditional military class, the rising new lower classes greedily demanding a greater share of pleasure, the association of war and sex, the utter emptiness and hypocrisy of contemporary religion, friendship, and poetry, and the relatively positive value of prose fiction.

WAUGH, LIKE FORD, uses literature as a clue to the nature of the novel's society, though unlike Ford, he shows the reader contemporary rubbish in full flower, not the insidious roots of the past. Ludovic, neurotic, probably a murderer, almost certainly a homosexual parasite and almost ironically Guy's rescuer, becomes a hugely successful writer who ultimately buys Castello Crouchback in Italy, the citadel as well as the tomb of the nineteenth century dream of love and humanism. He first writes an ambiguous collection of *Pensees*, whose value if any is largely linguistic.

The further he removed from human society and the less he attended to human speech, the more did words, printed and written, occupy his mind. The books he read were books about words. As he lay unshriven, his sleep was never troubled by the monstrous memories which might have been supposed to lie in wait for him in the dark. He dreamed of words and woke repeating them as though memorising a foreign vocabulary. Ludovic had become an addict of that potent intoxicant, the English language.

Not laboriously, luxuriously rather, Ludovic worked over his notebooks, curtailings, expanding, polishing; often consulting Fowler, not disdaining Roget; writing and rewriting in his small clerkly hand on the lined sheets of paper which the army supplied. (pp. 570-571)

This obsession with language is Ludovic's effort to deny the truth of reality and is Waugh's criticism of a certain type of Modern literature which he regarded as elegant but empty word play. The *Pensees* first appear in a fraudulent literary magazine called *Survival* because it is "devoted to the Survival of Values." Ludovic's *Pensees*, described by the editor: "as though Logan Pearsall Smith had written Kafka," is at a terrible distance from the tough-minded and passionate work of Pascal, and *Survival* is a fitting graveyard for all the sentimental illusions of humanism that the Second World War revealed to be devoid of vitality.

Waugh is probably indulging in some self literary criticism; Ludovic's method is a parody of his own. He told the *Paris Review* interviewer:

I regard writing not as investigation of character, but as an exercise in the use of language, and with this I am obsessed. I have no technical psychological interest. It is drama, speech, and events that interest me.³

Waugh is interested in "drama, speech, and events," in what he

3 "Evelyn Waugh," Interviewed by Julian Jebb in *Writers at Work, The Paris Review Interviews, Third Series* (New York: the Viking Press, 1967), p. 110.

he called a few lines later, "the word made manifest." Ludovic, on the other hand is making his escape from a reality too terrible for him to consider into a secure madness, as he consults Fowler and Roget, searching for dead words without any truth. Waugh answered with horror the *Paris Review* interviewer's question about refining and experimenting.

Experiment? God forbid! Look at the results of experiment in the case of a writer like Joyce. He started off writing very well, then you can watch him going mad with vanity. He ends up a lunatic.⁴

Later Ludovic writes a rubbishy novel, ironically entitled *The Death Wish*. The plot of *The Death Wish* is a madly solemn parody of Ronald Firbank. That this nonsense supplies a great human need in the post war world is a pathetic but devastating condemnation of that world. Ludovic like Ford's Rosetti deceives himself and thereby gains material success by helping others deceive themselves with the support of his lie.

BOTH FORD AND WAUGH employ Christianity and its fate in the modern world to illuminate the changes they see. Ford especially examines religious attitudes that have become so rigid and unnatural they have imprisoned English men and women. Rosetti, this time along with another late nineteenth century culture figure, Ruskin, serves an introductory motif. Macmaster has travelled to see and consult an apparently wealthy and cultured adornment of the Church of England, the Rev. Mr. Duchemin, who "in early life, had been a personal disciple of Mr. Ruskin and a patron and acquaintance of the poet-painter, the subject of Macmaster's monograph." (p. 51) Everything at the Duchemin's rectory is superficially the epitome of beauty and elegance: the food is lavish and extravagant; the silver is heavy and old; the roses are profusely full-blown; the pictures on the walls are Turners; "there was not so much as a peasant's cottage within a mile of the manor house." To Macmaster it is the ideal English home. But Duchemin's church is much the smallest and least distinguished looking building on the property. The intimate life of the Duchemins is shameful in some sinister way that is never made clear entirely but is associated with Ruskin and his own very peculiar relationships with women. Mrs. Duchemin sorrowfully claims to have been bought when still a child by her husband from her parents. The Rev. Mr. Duchemin five Saturdays of seven goes mad from the effort of his sermons, and shouts obscenities during his famous breakfasts, succumbing

4 Ibid., pp. 110-111.

only under the physical restraint of his curates, all of whom are chosen because they have the physiques of prize-fighters. Because the Breakfasts are a tradition, they go on in spite of the Rev. Mr. Duchemin's extraordinary outbursts, where the guests "continued talking with polite animation and listening with minute attention. To Tietjens that seemed the highest achievement and justification of English manners." (p. 110) Tietjens fails to recognize that the English pretence of calm in the face of aggressive insanity is another aspect of that hypocrisy that earlier he saw so clearly. The Rev. Mr. Duchemin's obscene outrages, significantly brought on by his sermon writing, coupled with his following the example set by Ruskin of buying a child bride and then living with her "like the blessed angels" are still others.

That a mad man is in charge of this cure for souls is perhaps the most extraordinary sign of religious bankruptcy. The established Church is utterly unable to provide some sensible guide for the difficulties in ordinary life. Like Duchemin's life, religion is a glamorous form that disguises dark and sinister realities.

Tietjens' personal Dark Wood of Error is an echo of his outer social world. The Tietjens' marriage is as ugly a nightmare as the Duchemins'. Duchemin "bought" his innocent Edith-Ethel; Sylvia tricked Tietjens. Both marriages are without any affection or love and continue to exist without any sexual relationship at all. The result for the Duchemins is madness and Edith-Ethel's horrors. Though she is terrified of having her marriage exposed, she falls into Macmaster's sentimentally sympathetic arms at almost their first meeting. For Tietjens there are torments about the doubtful paternity of the child who is his son, and for Sylvia, self-loathing after her affairs with a man she despises and gnawing anxiety resulting from Tietjens' calm rejection of her person and her being while he continues in the face of the world to accept her as his wife.

Sylvia is Roman Catholic, and although she has sufficient wit to recognize the living values of her religion in her mother's friend, Father Consett, Catholicism is for her a kind of superstition—she repeatedly looks for signs in events of the real world in order to support her irrational decisions—but more than that her Catholicism is a weapon in her sexual war with Tietjens. She allowed Tietjens to seduce her, thinking she was already pregnant and therefore in need of a suitable husband. Tietjens' gentlemen's code will not permit him to divorce Sylvia, and she claims her religion does not allow her to divorce him. Later, however, she begins divorce proceedings that she has no intention of carrying through in order to make a scandal of Tietjens' life and to tantalize him with the possibility of freedom. Though she

hates him, she prefers to live with him, making his life a hell because he has spoiled her for other men who now appear all to be tiresome fools and because, though she does not entirely understand it at first, she is roused to sexual jealousy by the thought that some other woman might attract Tietjens and, worse, might make him happy.

The slicking over gruesome reality with a pretence of beauty is not simply "hypocrisy" as Tietjens has it. These people are aware that they have become inadequate to a world that is threateningly complicated. They are frightened and hope that by enforcing simple responses and avoiding what they had not expected to exist they can maintain the child-like Victorian dream, and in Tietjen's case, the eighteenth century Tory dream. Campion, speaking of Dreyfus, the man who haunted pre-World War I Europe, says:

He was worse than guilty—the sort of fellow you couldn't believe in and yet couldn't prove anything against. The curse of the world. . . . Well, they are, . . . fellows like that *unsettle* society. You don't know where you are. You can't judge. They make you uncomfortable. . . . A brilliant fellow too [like Tietjens]. (p. 75)

These people do not know where they are, and they do not wish to know even that much. They are living just over the brink of Hell, like Dante's Francesca, fooled by prettiness into hoping for some pleasure at least, but actually barely surviving in mindless terror. And like Francesca also, they sentimentally gurggle about love, while their incomprehensible passion destroys them.

WAUGH LAUNCHES his hero, Guy Crouchback, at the very edge of the Second World War; he had already catalogued the capers and tricks of the suicidal society between the wars in his earlier novels. However, when necessary and at the appropriate time throughout the three volumes that make up *Sword of Honor*, Guy's past, along with the Crouchback family's and minor characters' too, is filled out. In fact, after merely introducing Guy's name, and in the genitive, the novel begins with a brief story of his grandparents, whose total happiness was delayed until some time after their wedding. But they endured in faith and received and offered the real thing. This provides not only a very brief glimpse of a nineteenth century dream vision of love and happiness, that joy that Guy so desperately wishes to attain; it is also a paradigm of Guy's own experience. He is not to be happy until his and the world's battles are won. Like Tietjens, he is a pilgrim through the false and bank-

rupt values of the twentieth century on his way to a private salvation.

Guy's marriage also failed. Virginia, Guy's wife, bored by the patterns and trappings of English Restoration country life recreated in Kenya where they were living, returned to London where she was unfaithful and subsequently divorced Guy to amuse herself with other marriages and liaisons. Like Ford, Waugh makes good use of Roman Catholicism, though for different ends. Guy's is one of the oldest Catholic families in England, and because of his religion he cannot accept the divorce spiritually, though he is forced to live with it as a civil arrangement. He retreats to live in Castello Crouchback in Italy which had been built by his grandparents in celebration of their marital bliss. His life is emotionally and physically suspended and futureless, like Tietjens'. An intolerable but apparently unsolvable dilemma over a woman, his wife, lies at the source of the despair of both men. Waugh describes Guy's life as he goes to confession from habit, having pathetically nothing to confess:

There was no risk of going deeper than the denunciation of his few infractions of law, of his habitual weaknesses. Into that wasteland where his soul languished he need not, could not, enter. He had no words to describe it. There were no words in any language. There was nothing to describe, merely a void. His was not 'an interesting case' he thought. No cosmic struggle raged in his sad soul. It was as though eight years back he had suffered a tiny stroke of paralysis; all his spiritual faculties were just perceptibly impaired. (p. 17)

Tietjens, against all the evidence of underlying madness and denying the clarity of his own intelligence to see its sham elsewhere, delighted in the surface perfection of English upper middle class manners. Guy, more genuinely blind than Tietjens, had placed his faith in an equally absurd illusion, the carefully reconstructed English squireocracy in Africa. It failed him financially, and it also failed him in every other way, most dramatically as an environment where any genuine human relationship might thrive. Virginia is not the maliciously intelligent creature that Sylvia is; she deserted Guy and his false life because she is an animal more honest about what she instinctively needs. Her fleeing reveals their life to have been an illusion, and she leaves Guy with nothing at all. The wars come as a relief to both men.

Tietjens, feeling all possibilities for his life are closed, has only his despair. He says:

One is either a body or a brain in these affairs. I suppose I'm more body than brain. . . . But my conscience won't let

me use my brain in this service. So I've a great hulking body! I'll admit I'm probably not much good. But I've nothing to live for: what I stand for isn't any more in this world. (p. 237)

He is like Dante's damned; he has lost the good of the intellect; and he wishes to die. In another place, thinking to himself, he is even clearer: "the best thing for him was to go and get wiped out as soon as possible." (p. 224) But at the same time Tietjens has slowly grown aware of his passion for another woman, Valentine Wannop. He cannot marry her because he cannot divorce, but he hopes to use the new freedom created by the war to gain at least something of genuine happiness before he is wiped out. Tietjens, however, does not spend his one night with his girl because, adding one further meaning to the title of the first volume of *Parade's End*, "Some Do Not."

The war and ultimately the possibility of death offer a solution to Guy's difficulties as well.⁵ Guy first welcomes the activity of war, hoping (and this is perhaps the major sustaining irony of *Sword of Honor*) to derive some life from it. The war brings him relief from the sexual suffering that is the source of the blight on his life.

For him . . . frustrated love had found its first satisfaction.

He was packed and dressed for a long journey, already on his way back to his own country to serve his King. . . . splendidly everything had become clear. The enemy at last was plain in view, huge and hateful, all disguise cast off.

It was the Modern Age in arms. (pp. 14-15)

The ambiguity of the last sentence is central to Guy's journey. He believes the enemy to be revealed by the unholy alliance of the Germans and the Russians, and that the struggle is to be simple like a child's view of the Crusades, Christian against Paynim, "the Modern Age in arms," a fight for honor. By the novel's conclusion, this idea of the enemy dissolves and a new idea forms: "the Modern Age in arms" itself is the enemy.

BOTH TIETJENS and Guy suffer physically as well as psychologically and morally from the war; they undergo a deathly sickness of the body and spirit to recover finally into a new awareness. When Tietjens begins his recovery from his wounds, "it's as if a certain area of [his] brain had been wiped

⁵ Waugh examines the development of these attitudes in Guy and other characters more gradually and with greater breadth in the novel. When the third volume, *The End of the Battle*, first appeared, that chapter called later in *Sword of Honor* "The End of the Battle" was entitled "The Death Wish."

white" (p. 170); he has lost most of his prodigious memory for facts and is reduced to reading the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which he had in the past despised for its inaccuracies. He has been as he himself expresses it, like the strong man, smitten in his pride. Tietjens literally must begin to educate himself anew.

Along with the facts from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Tietjens must learn some new truths about the land of hope and glory. Ford with a dazzling display of incredibly complicated narrative technique chronicles the many new lessons concerning death, love, and dishonor that Tietjens must face. His father and brother have betrayed the bonds of family love and trust, believing the lying gossip of an outsider that Tietjens was "a squirt who lived on women's money and had got the daughter of his [father's] oldest friend with child." His bank, the foundation of English respectability, has deceitfully refused his check; his club, the capstone of that respectability, will ask him to resign. Macmaster betrays friendship, deceiving Tietjens into working up some false statistics as an intellectual challenge, which he then fraudulently passes to the government as his own, receiving a knighthood as his reward. The result is that Macmaster, along with Edith-Ethel Duchemin, now Mrs. Macmaster, deserts Tietjens and his girl, Valentine.

Like Dante the pilgrim, Tietjens has moved in awareness from the simple confusions of sexual passion, through the violence and simple frauds of the actual fighting war to suffer treachery and betrayal, the worst of all human crimes because it undermines the trust and love which is the basis of every relationship between man and man. The immediate result for Tietjens is a wish to return to the battle in the hope he will be killed.

At first Guy appears to rediscover himself in his cheerful war-time activity. He seems to rejoin humanity through the good fellowship of regimental traditions and through his sense of himself fighting for justice and his king. But these are as much illusions as Tietjens' ideal of English manners. Apthorpe, his one friend in the regiment, is a fraud, though largely a comic one, and he proves himself to be no friend as he pompously casts Guy off in his apparent rise in the military hierarchy. But Guy's greatest disillusion is the result of the allied military defeat in Crete and of his own physical sickness which results from the hardships of his escape from debacle.

During what Waugh calls the second stage of his pilgrimage, Guy gains a new friend, Ivor Claire. Though they are very different, they share a common aloofness from other men. For no discernible cause, though sometimes his age is to blame. Guy is not liked or trusted. Guy recognizes in Claire another man who

stands apart from his fellows. Another of Guy's acquaintances, Ian Kilbannock, tells Guy that he and Claire are "hopelessly upper class. You're the 'Fine Flower of the Nation.' You can't deny it and *it won't do*. . . . This is a People's war. . . . The upper classes are on the secret list." (p. 375) Ian's hero is the horrible hairdresser, Trimmer. As the comic puns in his name suggest, Trimmer is the embodiment of multiple fraud, opportunism and publicity.

Claire may be as Guy imagines, "the fine flower of them all, . . . quintessential England, the man Hitler had not taken into account," (p. 386) but he runs away from Crete, making good a personal escape against orders to surrender. If he is out of his time, it is not as Ian argues, that he is something left over from a more romantic past, but as he himself thinks, he is ahead of his time. In the future, it will be proper for officers to desert their men.

A kind of ironic illumination of Claire's desertion of duty is provided by a career soldier, Major Hound, known familiarly as Fido. Under the stress of battle, he goes mad, becomes a selfish animal. His collapse is described in religious terms of the damned. (p. 459) He is probably murdered by a fellow soldier, Ludovic, who in a heroic escape from Crete in an open boat, saves Guy but eliminates everyone else on board.

During the battle of Crete, the intimate fellowship of his old regiment, the Halberdiers, is revealed as an illusion to Guy.

He was . . . without place or function, a spectator. And all the deep sense of desolation which he had sought to cure which from time to time momentarily seemed to be cured, overwhelmed him as of old. His heart sank. It seemed to him as though literally an organ of his body were displaced, subsiding, falling heavily like a feather in a vacuum jar; Philoctetes set apart from his fellows by an old festering wound. (p. 495)

Guy's heart as a feather falling in the vacuum of his physical reality is an especially apt description, as I will try to make clear below.

Even the Church is no refuge. Before going to battle, Guy had once again gone to confession, only to discover by accident that the priest was a spy, using the confessional to gain information which he passed on to the enemy.

Like Tietjens, Guy has witnessed the ugly stupidity of actual battle. In both novels the battle is a kind of test of human values in which the heroes naively believed. They are forced to gaze at disgusting human weakness and the betrayals of private and public honor, trust, and love. Guy, just as he had retreated from

Virginia's assault on his innocence to a living death in Italy, retreats again, this time into silence. This refusal to speak has a precedent in his own family. His brother Ivo went mad, holing himself away from everyone and starving himself to death. Waugh vaguely suggests that Ivo's despair is religious, but never makes it entirely clear. Tietjens also has a brother who, upon hearing the decision that the Allies will not march on Berlin, which he regards as a betrayal of France, turns his face to the wall and, with one brief relenting, refuses to speak for the rest of his life. Guy (briefly) and his brother and Tietjens' brother are versions of that despair Dante portrays, so absolute that all human communication fails. There is only one expectation, death. But also like Tietjens, Guy is rescued by a woman, Mrs. Stitch, who simply storms into his room crying in Italian that the Captain has escaped, her version of the alarm given by Guy's servants in Italy when the cow escaped into the garden. Though Guy does not understand or even know it, Mrs. Stitch has put him back on the path of life by invoking memories of the Crouchback family paradise garden in Italy. She also informs Guy of Claire's ignoble escape, thus losing for Guy all notions of simple group honor of the right and just. She and Claire together wipe the slate clean of the dream, preparing for Guy's recognition of the ugly ambiguity of actuality. She is not, however, Guy's Beatrice, but one of her surrogates.

Tietjens is convinced that the traitors to the code of the English Gentlemen whom he seems on all sides are evidence that England will betray her allies, France in particular. Guy must take in the reality of what he regards to be the traitorous action of his country in the alliance with Russia. As Waugh presents the results of this political and military move, England deserts Greece, turns against gallant Finland, and short supplies its own troops to arm Russia. Though Guy recovers his speech, he does not recover any positive view of the world around him until some time later.

The third volume of Ford's work is entitled "A Man Could Stand Up," which accurately describes Tietjens' final moral capacity as well as the new times when only the rare true man might stand. The middle section of this volume is limited to a few hours of Tietjens' life in the trenches; mostly it is the line of Tietjens' thought as he considers his life. He longs for some escape from the ugliness and muddle of the war, from the twentieth century altogether, and romantically dreams of the seventeenth century, another time when a man could stand up. Earlier Sylvia and also Campion with some justice have accused Tietjens of simplistically modelling his life literally on the per-

fection of Jesus and thereby cruelly judging and withdrawing from his imperfect fellow human beings. He admits to Campion:

I am really, sir, the English public schoolboy. . . . What with the love of truth that—God help me!—they rammed into me at Clifton and the belief Arnold forced upon Rugby that the vilest of sins . . . is to peach to the head master! That's me, sir. Other men get over their schooling. I never have. I remain adolescent. (p. 490)

Tietjens has never grown up into the world of adult human complexities and ambiguities, though public institutions—here the system by which children are educated, or rather kept ignorant—are not free from responsibility for this intolerable situation. With similar effect, Waugh has transformed Guy's family seat into a convent school, and also set Guy's military training in a boys' school, dramatizing the barbaric childishness of men's serious activities as well as Guy's perverse innocence. As Tietjens performs his duties at the front, he indulges in a vision of himself as George Herbert, who personifies his temptation to retreat to the English countryside and Anglican sainthood. This is like Guy's anguished hiding first in Africa, and then in Italy, and finally in the army away from human responsibility and recognition in the twentieth century. And Sylvia's and Campion's accusations of Tietjens' inhuman behavior are like Virginia's angry attacks on Guy, which also like those of Sylvia and Campion are just sufficiently true to hurt. The first is when Guy tries to make love to Virginia on St. Valentine's day, telling her that in the sight of the Church, she is still his wife and the priests would say, "Go ahead." "I thought," she says, "you'd taken a fancy to me again and wanted a bit of fun for the sake of old times. I thought you'd chosen me specially, and by God you had. Because I was the only woman in the whole world your priests would let you go to bed with. That was my attraction. You wet, smug, obscene, pompous, sexless, lunatic pig." (pp. 148-149) And like Tietjens Guy does not get his one night with the woman he loves. Later Virginia tells Guy, "You're dying out as a family. . . . Even Angela's boy, they tell me, wants to be a monk. Why do you Crouchbacks do so little ----ing?" His answer only half justifies him. "I don't know about the others. With me I think perhaps, it's because I associate it with love. And I don't love any more." (pp. 692-695) He is indeed dying and his not loving is the most dramatic symptom of his condition. His heart is like the feather falling in the vacuum.

Tietjens is rescued from his dreams first by his acceptance of human responsibility. Ironically the source of those of his virtues that are his vices is also the source of his true virtues,

and he knows it. He is forced by his knowledge of his ability and his powerful sense of responsibility to take command of his battalion, which for him is a loathsome prospect.

Ford never shows the reader how Tietjens takes command of the battalion—ironically for only five days before he is unjustly removed. Instead he presents Tietjens dealing with two Jewish soldiers. The first soldier because he is both Jewish and a journalist for the extreme left, he reassigns out of the battalion to the Jewish regiment, thinking unhappily that responsibility hardens the heart. The other, Second Lieutenant Aranjuez, Tietjens saves from burial in mud and slime which is covering them both. Before he can do anything, he tells the imploring Aranjuez, "I've got to save myself first!" Tietjens' recognition of his true position, that he is useless to others until he is himself made whole, is accompanied by a small, almost symbolic, head wound and most importantly by Tietjens' acceptance of partial success. The soldier, little more than a boy, loses an eye, for which Tietjens feels responsible, worrying that if he had not rescued him, he would have both eyes, but also knowing that if he had left him in the mud safe from the sniper's bullet, he would have drowned. The final words of this section inform Tietjens of Aranjuez's condition: "He'll get through." (p. 644) And so indeed will Tietjens.

But responsibility and its ambiguities are only part of Tietjens' rejection of the temptation to retreat into the paralysis of Anglican sainthood. He loves Valentine Wannop and though he cannot marry her, he decides to live with her, giving over his vision of himself as a country parson. A rich set of images surround this decision. He almost immediately feels himself "like a Greek God striding through the sea." (p. 631) And then like one of the figures on Michelangelo's Medici tombs, but he rejects this in favor of the Michelangelo Adam. Valentine thinks of herself as Alcestis confronting death and of Tietjens, not as the foolish Admetus, but as Apollo. All of this suggests escape from death, rebirth, new beginnings, and rejection of the worn out past, especially those false values of what we have come to call Victorian Christianity. Tietjens and Valentine appear to be getting a second chance at an Edenic innocence without the hampering trappings of society and organized religion, and based on accurate knowledge of the human condition. The classical images combined with Adam evoke a pastoral innocence.

Guy is also saved from death by responsibility, but more along the lines of an older, sterner Christianity. During the Mass for his father's funeral, Guy remembers his father's life, thinks of his own death, and then considers the letter that, though not

his father's last, marks the conclusion to their correspondence, in which his father expresses concern for Guy's apathy. This triggers in Guy a chain of associations that leads to a recognition of his failure, much like Tietjens'. Guy's father had tried to tell him that God has commanded that Man ask for something and that the deadly core of his apathy was that he had failed to ask. He prays to be given a task and the strength to do it.

His prayer is answered when his wife Virginia, pregnant with another's child, asks him to marry her again. Suffering no illusions about Virginia or himself or what their marriage will be, he agrees because he is asked and for the sake of the unborn child, a decision both very like and very unlike Tietjens' decision to marry Sylvia.

When Guy and Virginia renew their sexual life, Virginia finally heals the wound she had opened when she left him, but Guy is not cured by her of what Waugh calls the Death Wish, a condition that infects the entire society of the novel. Guy gives over his Death Wish as he moves outside his self-pity, and acts, working to save a group of Jews. Though Guy, like Tietjens, saves himself by saving Jews, in the unimaginable horrors of the Second War, Jews assume a much greater significance than in Ford's novel. The Jews are for Guy like Virginia and her child; they offer him "in a world of hate and waste . . . the chance of doing a single small act to redeem the times." (p. 742)

Again like Tietjens, his rescue is less than perfect. Two of the group, the Kanyis, are retained by the Partisans because they are essential to the working of an electric generator. Ironically, because Guy has befriended Mrs. Kanyi, they are eliminated. This is far more hideous than the loss of Aranjuez's eye, but "Quantitative Judgements don't apply." Without his friendship with Mrs. Kanyi, the others might not have been rescued; because of his friendship she and her husband are killed; through her friendship also, Guy is saved.

At her last meeting with Guy, Mrs. Kanyi explains the Death Wish.

It is too simple to say that only the Nazis wanted war. These communists wanted it too. It was the only way in which they could come to power. Many of my people wanted it, to be revenged on the Germans, to hasten the creation of the national state. It seems to me there was a will to war, a death wish, everywhere. Even good men thought their private honour would be satisfied by war. They could assert their manhood by killing and being killed. They would accept hardships in recompense for having been selfish and lazy. Danger justified privilege. (p. 788)

Guy in recognition, confession and request for forgiveness, admits to her that he was one of those men. The Modern Age in Arms with which the novel began has taken on a new, more terrible, and more humanly complex meaning.

Guy is rewarded for his taking on human responsibility. Waugh perhaps too neatly winds up Guy's affairs. Virginia conveniently dies; the woman who cares for her child conveniently marries Guy; Guy conveniently takes to farming the family estates; and our last view of Guy shows him completely accepted by his fellows—he is called to join them in a game of "slosh." None of this convenient neatness spoils the novel, however. Much of the tone of *Sword of Honor* like Waugh's best work has been comic, for which the mechanical happy end is suitable. Guy's brother-in-law says resentfully, "things have turned out very conveniently for Guy," (p. 796) almost expressing Waugh's and the reader's complicity. Though Guy is neatly packaged away, the Modern Age looms without any resolution. Communists, who are more loyal to their party than to their country or their humanity, undermine those values Waugh admired. Innocent people are murdered for causes; honor, except as a personal and ambiguous notion, no longer exists, if it ever did; opportunism of every sort shows itself as the dominating human motive. The journey of the pilgrim and the sights he meets along the way, as even Dante knew, are easier to describe and are of greater interest than that happy existence in salvation, and Waugh leaves Guy to the happiness he has earned.

Tietjens, like Guy, escapes with his girl to the country. Virginia aided Guy by producing a child and then dying; Sylvia has also made Tietjens' escape possible. She finally revealed her true character to Campion probably saving Tietjens from death in the trenches; she forces Tietjens to recognize his love for Valentine; and on a whim she leaves Tietjens, removing all the furniture from his house. Though Tietjens had decided to live with Valentine, these actions of Sylvia make that decision possible. Like Guy, Tietjens does not live in the family house. And just as Guy sells Castello Crouchback to Ludovic, Tietjens is allowing his family home to be rented to an American parvenu. The letting go of the houses in both cases is a valedictory to the old family and social life where tradition seemed secure.

Almost all women in England at that time believed that peace would restore normality. [Servants, privacy, luxury, power, and pleasure], . . . things she would never know again. (pp. 693-694)

Tietjens and Guy seek the only peace possible, a private one, in a new self-constructed, and very circumscribed Eden

away from other men and their affairs, a Paradise Regained within. Ford insists many times throughout the novel that the "land remains"; the traditional spirit of England is there waiting for men worthy of it to cultivate it. In spite of the calamities clarified by the Armistice, "the land had not changed. . . . Well, the breed had not changed. . . . Only, the times . . . they had changed." (p. 762) Both Tietjens and Guy return to their beginnings to meet the challenge of the new times.

STARTING FROM the simple association of the disastrous relationship between men and women and world cataclysm, both Ford and Waugh have chronicled the changes and their effects in the modern world. Their observations and conclusions, their very plotting of their novels, demonstrate remarkable similarities and parallels. Yet the novels are very different as the neatness of Waugh's conclusion and the open-endedness of Ford's indicate. Valentine is about to have another child for Tietjens; Guy and his new wife have no children of their own and expect none. Part of this difference is owed to the temperaments of the two writers; part surely to the view that the Second War absolutely completed what the First had revealed. But most important is the difference in skills of the two writers. Ford's great novel covers mysterious human motive and psychology from inside the characters. Waugh, on the other hand, chronicles his times from outside, and his great religious faith leaves the mystery to God.

Pisces

M. E. GRENANDER

Cold's toothless denture
snaps at stark brown bare branches—
crocuses venture.

Leonardo

MICHAEL RALEIGH

Shift clinging to the narrow shoulders
sweat winding down his brow, into the eyes,
eyes wide, as if in horror
at the dark face that took life before him—
its own eyes now glinting in recognition—
the growing shadows in the airless room
went unnoticed,
the head grew healthy on the canvas,
brush went limp and ragged.

He stepped back, breathing heavily,
relieved an itchy beard
with one greasy knuckle,
and surveyed the chamber absently.
Found himself surrounded
by piles of white mocking canvas,
nude walls, formeless blocks of Paduan marble,
the very ceilings, the heavens.

The heavens!

Marginalia . . .

(continued)

Adjustment to the loss of Richard Lautz is not made any easier when we are also losing another stalwart, Anne Pryszlak. Anne came to us four years ago as a student assistant. She handled the complexities of subscriptions, postal regulations, mailing labels, etc. with such quiet competence as to earn the job of Business Manager. An English major, Anne was graduated last June. She hopes to make a career in magazine or newspaper work, and I hope she does. There must be other offices that could benefit as I have from her intelligence, independence, and tranquil beauty seldom ruffled by the pressures of being both student and business manager simultaneously.

When J. D. McClatchy resigned as Associate Editor a few

years ago to take a position at Yale, I knew Four Quarters had lost a talent that could not be replaced. An incredibly gifted young man, "Sandy" is building a reputation as poet, short story writer, critic, and teacher. I doubt that I will ever again work with someone having Sandy's unique talents, but I have learned since James Butler became Associate Editor that each "replacement" is not that at all. Each new member of the staff does not merely "replace" a former member but instead brings his or her special—and different—talents to the renewal of the magazine. Butler was not McClatchy's replacement, it soon became clear; there could be none. He is himself, and therein lies his value. Barely out of his twenties, Jim is already in the first rank of Wordsworth scholars. Yet he somehow finds time to read scores of manuscripts and give me the benefit of critical perceptions that are the product of a keen and disciplined mind.

Our new poetry editor, Joseph Meredith, is another case in point. He shares Richard's love for poetry and his perceptiveness as a reader, but he is also a practicing poet and a teacher of creative writing. A graduate of the University of Florida writing program, he studied under John Frederick Nims and also worked under a number of guest poets, including John Ciardi and James Dickey. He therefore brings to the job the skills of his academic training and the sensitivity of his poetic craft. His willingness to face the unending stream of poems from the mailbox gives me faith and hope.

Patricia Shields steps into Anne Pryszlak's job of trying to tame a wild set of punch cards. Neat and efficient, Paty has already made some progress in transforming the frequently chaotic office into a reasonable facsimile of a business office. We wish her success—and patience.

The transfusions completed, the new blood coursing through our veins, Four Quarters is strong and vigorous as we enter upon our silver anniversary year. While it is unlikely that the event will be marked with as much confusion as the Bicentennial, we are doing our best. Among several trial balloons still afloat is a special issue in July of '76 dealing with the state of the American Dream today. Stories, articles, or poems that relate to this theme are hereby encouraged.

—J.J.K.

CONTRIBUTORS

ANN JONES is making her second appearance in these pages. Since we published "The Very Special Dead People," her work has won increasing recognition. She has won the Emily Clark Balch Award for Fiction and had one of her stories reprinted in *The Best American Short Stories, 1972*. The University of Missouri Press has published a collection of her stories, *Hope Should Always*, and she has recently completed a novel. She lives in Three Rivers, California. FLORENCE WEINBERGER, another Californian, has persisted with poetry since age eight and has had her poems and stories in *Nimrod*, *The Smith*, and other little magazines. T. ALAN BROUGHTON's poems have often been published here, but "The Runaways" is his fiction debut here. Other stories have appeared in *Sewanee Review*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, and *Cosmopolitan*. Carnegie-Mellon University Press published a volume of his poems, *In the Face of Descent*, earlier this year. Ithaca House has just published *Fish Light*, a collection of poems by MICHAEL WATERS, who presently holds a fellowship at Ohio University. MARY NORTON KRATT lives in Charlotte, N.C. and has published her work in *Cold Mountain Review*, *Wind*, and *North Carolina Folklore Journal*. "Happy Birthday" is JUDY CROWE's first published story, always a special pleasure for a writer and a source of pride for this magazine. She lives in Grass Valley, a small town in the Sierra Nevada foothills, with her husband and three children. DONALD HABERMAN is Associate Professor of English at Arizona State University. He contributed some years ago to our special Thornton Wilder issue. Along with two other editors, he is at work on a massive bibliography of writings about George Bernard Shaw. M. E. GRENANDER's poems have appeared here regularly. She teaches at the State University of New York at Albany. MICHAEL RALEIGH is appearing for the first time in print with "Leonardo." He lives in Chicago and teaches English at De Paul University.

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